



State Legislative Update for the Week of March 2 - 6, 2015

Monday, March 2, 2015

Senate Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Senator Metzen introduced:

SF 1231: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to design and construct a memorial honoring Filipino veterans.
Referred to the Committee on Finance.

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Anderson, P., introduced:

HF 1296: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money for a grant to Stearns County for administrative funding to support a service provider serving veterans.
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

HF 134, a bill for an act relating to veterans; making technical changes to veterans trust; removing obsolete provisions was read for the third time and placed upon its final passage. The bill passed, 130-0.

Committee Hearings

Committee: **House Veterans Affairs Division**

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Agenda:

HF 1106 (Davids): Service-disabled, veteran-owned businesses ensured by commissioner of administration to receive a percentage of state procurement, and bid preferences provided. This bill requires the Commissioner of Administration to ensure that businesses owned by service-disabled veterans receive a percent of state procurements and provides bid preference to the same group. It directs the Commissioner of Administration to solicit bids from service-disabled, veteran-owned businesses and award at least six percent of state procurements to qualified businesses each year and directs every state agency to award at least six percent of their annual professional and technical procurements to service-disabled, veteran-owned businesses. The bill also directs the Commissioner of

Administration to award up to a six percent preference to service-disabled, veteran-owned businesses for the purchase for specified goods or services. With the understanding that the author will continue to work with the Department of Administration to address concerns, the bill was moved, as amended, and re-referred to State Government Finance.

HF 243 (Newton): Driver's licenses and Minnesota identification cards Purple Heart designation established, and state park permits provided. This bill adds an optional Purple Heart designation on driver's licenses and Minnesota identification cards, and provides free state parks and trails access to Purple Heart license or ID card holders. Requirements to receive the designation match those in place to obtain a special license plate for combat wounded military personnel (which also makes the designation available to active duty members of the military who have received a Purple Heart). The bill includes a delayed effective date to accommodate a new information technology system that the Department of Public Safety is currently developing. The bill was moved, as amended, and re-referred to the Mining and Outdoor Recreation Policy Committee.

HF 545 (Johnson): Veterans-to-agriculture pilot program established, and money appropriated. This bill requires the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) to establish a pilot program that encourages veterans to enter agricultural and food production-related career fields. \$150,000 is appropriated to MnSCU in FY 2016, and \$600,000 is appropriated in FY 2017 for this purpose. The pilot program is to be coordinated by the Southern Minnesota Center for excellence for agriculture at the North Mankato campus of South Central College, in collaboration with a number of additional entities with relevant expertise. In addition to South Central College, funds are appropriated to offer the program at up to six additional colleges in FY 2017, including one in the metro area and five in greater Minnesota.

Enrollees in the pilot program would undergo an intensive four-to-eight week training involving academic study, employer-outreach and job development, and the development of career-building skills. Upon completion enrollees would earn a certificate of completion or other appropriate academic credit. A report to the legislature on program operations, participation, job placements, and unmet needs is required no later than December 15, 2017. The bill was moved, as amended, and re-referred to Higher Education Policy and Finance Committee.

HF 961 (Dill): Minnesota veteran home residents allowed to take antlerless deer without permit. This bill permits residents of veterans homes to hunt and take antlerless deer using a firearm or muzzleloader without obtaining a permit to do so. The privilege does not extend to other members of the veteran's hunting party or in areas closed to antlerless deer hunting or where quotas are placed on the taking of antlerless deer. The bill was moved and re-referred to the Mining and Outdoor Recreation Policy Committee.

Committee: **State Departments and Veterans Budget Division**

Chair: Sen. Tom Saxhaug

Room: 112 Capitol

Time: 4:00 PM

Agenda:

SF 74 (Gazelka): Camp Ripley sentinel landscape designation and coordinating committee established. This bill establishes a coordinating committee to designate certain lands in the vicinity of Camp Ripley to be contained in the sentinel landscape. The purpose of this mission is to identify lands near Camp Ripley that are important to the nation's defense and Camp Ripley's role in the nation's defense. Owners of designated lands will be encouraged to voluntarily manage their land in a manner that is consistent with Camp Ripley's military mission. It also requires the Adjutant General, in consultation with the coordinating committee, to prepare a report, by January 16, 2017, on the committee's work and progress in shaping Camp Ripley's sentinel landscape. The bill was recommended to pass, as amended, and re-referred to the Committee on Finance.

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Committee Hearings

Committee: **House Civil Law and Data Practices**

Chair: Rep. Peggy Scott

Agenda:

HF 546 (Dettmer): Government entity permitted to release military release forms to another government entity for purpose of locating records. The committee report was adopted and re-referred to State Government Finance.

Committee: **House State Government Finance**

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Agenda:

HF 283 (Kresha): Camp Ripley nearby lands designated as sentinel landscape, coordinating committee created, and report required. The committee report was adopted and re-referred to Government Operations and Elections Policy.

Committee: **House Taxes**

Chair: Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda:

HF 300 (Lohmer): Social security benefits subtraction allowed.

HF 304 (Lueck): Social Security benefits subtraction allowed.

HF 308 (Davids): Social Security benefits subtraction phase in allowed.

HF 309 (Davids): Social Security benefits subtraction phase in allowed.

HF 746 (Atkins): Social Security benefit subtraction phase in allowed.

Comparison of Social Security Exclusion Bills

Bill number	Chief Author	Phase-in schedule	First year subtraction allowed	Year in which exclusion fully phased-in
H.F. 300	Lohmer	10 percent per year for 10 years	Tax year 2015	Tax year 2024

H.F. 304	Lueck	20 percent per year for 5 years	Tax year 2016	Tax year 2020
H.F. 308	Davids	10 percent per year for 10 years	Tax year 2015	Tax year 2024
H.F. 309	Davids	Increasing percentage per year for 8 years	Tax year 2015	Tax year 2022
H.F. 746	Atkins	20 percent per year for 5 years	Tax year 2016	Tax year 2020

House Research Department

All the above bills dealing with social security benefits subtraction were laid over for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Tax bill.

HF 125 (Dettmer): Veteran jobs tax credit provided. The bill provides employers with a nonrefundable income tax credit for hiring qualified veterans. The credit equals ten percent of the wages paid to the veteran, and the maximum credit is \$3,000 for each disabled veteran hired, \$1,500 for each unemployed veteran hired, and \$500 for each 9-11 veteran hired. It disallows the credit if the employer employs or has previously employed the veteran. It would be effective tax year 2015. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Tax bill.

HF 312 (Dettmer): Military retirement pay subtraction phase-in provided. This bill provides for a military pay subtraction of a specified dollar amount for each year or portion of a year of military service up to a maximum of 20 years. For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014, the specified dollar amount is \$500; the specified dollar amount is \$1,000 for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015; and the specified dollar amount of \$1,500 for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2016. This would be effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Tax bill.

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

The Veterans Day on the Hill Rally, jointly sponsored by the Commanders' Task Force, United Veterans Legislative Council and the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers, took place in the Cedar Street Armory at 10:00 a.m. Over 275 Veterans from across the state were in attendance.

Senate Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Senators Westrom, Gazelka and Stumpf introduced:

SF 1335: A bill for an act relating to human services; modifying group residential housing by requiring a supplementary service rate for a facility in Stearns County; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 256I.05, by adding a subdivision.

Referred to the Committee on Health, Human Services and Housing.

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Hancock and Miller introduced:

HF 1414: A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for veterans homes in Montevideo and Bemidji; allowing for nonstate contributions; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

Metsa, Melin, Newberger and Simonson introduced:

HF 1420: A bill for an act relating to energy; providing factors to be considered in approving solar photovoltaic modules for a public utility solar project; appropriating money.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Committee Hearings

Committee: Senate Environment and Energy, Subcommittee on Fish and Wildlife

Chair: Sen. Matt Schmit

Agenda:

SF 1020 (Bakk): Antlerless deer taking without permit for veterans home residents. This bill permits residents of veterans homes to hunt and take antlerless deer using a firearm or muzzleloader without obtaining a permit to do so. The privilege does not extend to other members of the veteran's hunting party or in areas closed to antlerless deer hunting or where quotas are placed on the taking of antlerless deer. The bill was laid on the table for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Environment and Energy bill.

SF 365 (Kiffmeyer): Firearms safety certificate requirement veterans exception. This bill would allow a person who has successfully completed basic training to obtain a hunting license without having a firearms safety certificate. The bill was laid on the table for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Environment and Energy bill.

Thursday, March 5, 2015

Senate Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Senators Tomassoni and Hoffman introduced:

SF 1415: A bill for an act relating to energy; providing factors to be considered in approving solar photovoltaic modules for a public utility solar project; appropriating money.

Referred to the Committee on Environment and Energy.

Senators Westrom, Gazelka and Ingebrigtsen introduced:

SF 1428: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money for a grant to Stearns County for administrative funding to support a service provider serving veterans. Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senators Carlson, Saxhaug and Anderson introduced:

SF 1446: A bill for an act relating to veterans; changing "Hire a Veteran Month" from May to July; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 10.565. Referred to the Committee on State and Local Government.

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest: None

Committee Hearings

Committee: House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance

Chair: Rep. Tony Cornish

Agenda:

HF 406 (O'Driscoll): Community safety personnel training about use of de-escalation techniques funding provided. Appropriates \$100,000 in each year of the biennium to the commissioner of public safety for training state and local community safety personnel in the use of crisis de-escalation techniques. The commissioner must consult with the Minnesota Peace Officers and Training Board, and may consult with other relevant individuals, when selecting a training service provider. The training service provider must have a demonstrated understanding of veterans' issues. The training opportunities must be provided statewide. The committee report was laid on the table for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Public Safety and Crime Prevention bill.

Upcoming Committee Hearings of Veterans Interest Week of March 9 - 13, 2015

Monday, March 9, 2015

Committee: **House Veterans Affairs Division**

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 12:45 PM

Agenda:

HF 705 (Howe): Congressionally chartered veterans organization property provided reduced classification rate.

HF 745 (Howe): Veterans preference procedures and rights modified.

HF 1296 (Anderson): Stearns County provided grant for administrative funding to support a service provider serving veterans, and money appropriated.

HF 1414 (Hancock): Montevideo and Bemidji; veteran homes funding provided, nonstate contributions allowed, bonds issued, and money appropriated.

HF 127 (Dettmer): USS Minnesota commissioning activities grant funding provided, and money appropriated.

HF 506 (Schoen): LPC, LPCC, or LADC temporary licensing provided for former and current military members.

Committee: **Senate State and Local Government**

Chair: Sen. Patricia Torres Ray

Room: 107 Capitol

Time: 2:00 PM

Agenda:

SF 888 (Saxhaug): State Government, veterans and military affairs appropriations bill.